

(San Antonio, TX) - Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez delivered the following remarks at the scoping meeting for the National Bio and Agro Defense Facility Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) tonight in San Antonio, TX:

"I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak to you today about the importance of San Antonio and specifically the Texas Research Park being selected as the site of the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF). There are several important aspects of San Antonio that make the perfect selection.

"First, throughout the competition, San Antonio has always maintained a united effort. I had a chance to visit all three potential sites here in San Antonio...Southwest Research, Brook City Base and of course the Texas Research Park. They all echoed the same sentiment that they would get behind the Texas site selected and ensure they were ultimately selected. They have been true to their word. All of these partners along with University partners created the Texas Bio and Agro-Defense Consortium (TBAC) to ensure our success and they continue their work toward that goal today.

"Second, San Antonio has a tradition of managing and utilizing these types of facilities. From the researchers at the Health Science Center and UTSA, to the experts at Southwest Research, San Antonio has enjoyed a reputation as a top notch research leader in biotechnology. All of these facilities have always placed a high premium on safety and security and the NBAF lab will continue that tradition. Today, Southwest Research is considered one of the leading bio-containment centers in the country.

"Lastly, San Antonio has always led the effort to protect our national interests. As a city hailed as Military City USA, we have always played a significant role in our nation's security. This is just a natural progression of our commitment to keep this country free from harm. After a frightening event as 9/11, we must stay diligent as a community and as a country. San Antonio will continue to maintain its leadership and the NBAF will be an extension of that tradition.

"I would encourage everyone to share your comments and thoughts with DHS. We are here to listen to ensure that this project fulfills not only the mission of DHS but of this community as well. Thank You."

###